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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 000755

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TAGS: PHUM CH CU PREL BR UNHRC TIP

SUBJECT: BRAZIL POSITIONS ON CUBA, CHINA, AND OTHER CHR
DEMARCHES

REF: A. STATE 64048

1B. STATE 44603

1C. STATE 41252

1D. BRASILIA 676

1E. BRASILIA 616

1F. STATE 65652

Classified By: Poloff David G. Mosby for reasons 1.5 B/D.

11. (C) Summary: According to the head of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry's Human Rights Division, Brazil will abstain on any Cuba or China resolutions and on a Chinese "no-action" motion. (Note: Ambassador will raise the Cuba and China resolutions at a more senior level again March 29. End note.) Brazil may support a resolution on Turkmenistan. Brazil will support resolutions on North Korea, and will wait to study the proposed text on Iran before deciding. The GOB condemns the Israeli execution of Hamas' leader and considers it an obstacle to peace. Brazil is more supportive than the USG of several proposed resolutions regarding economic, social, and cultural rights and the links between development, democracy, and human rights. The GOB will wait to see the proposed texts for Iraq and Zimbabwe before deciding. End summary.

12. (C) On March 24, Poloff met with Andre Saboia, head of the Foreign Ministry's (MRE) Human Rights Division, to deliver ref A talking points, on the Cuba and China resolutions (The GOB will abstain in both cases. See paragraphs 3 and 4.), and to discuss USG and GOB priorities and cooperation with the GRULAC during the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (CHR) (refs B and C). Poloff emphasized to Saboia the USG's interest in cooperating with GRULAC countries during this session of the CHR.

(Note: Ambassador will again raise the Cuba and China resolutions March 29 with MRE Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs. Ambassador raised the points previously with Under Secretary for Political Affairs Vera Pedrosa on March 19 and was told Brazil would abstain (ref D). On March 12 Poloff had provided the MRE's Assistant Secretary for Human and Social Themes Department with talking

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points about USG CHR priorities and cooperation with the GRULAC drawn from refs B and C (ref E). In addition, on March 26, Poloff provided the MRE's UN Division with copies of the CHR talking points and provided that office and the Human Rights Division the revised text on the China resolution (ref F). End note.

Brazil Says It Will Abstain on Cuba and China

13. (C) Saboia reiterated that GOB policy is not to support country-specific resolutions, with few exceptions. Saboia said Brazil will maintain its traditional position of abstention on any Cuba resolution. While recognizing human rights problems in Cuba, the GOB prefers to maintain a bilateral dialogue with Castro's regime, he said. He argued that President Lula's good relationship with Castro places the GOB in a position to have a quiet, but positive impact on the human rights situation in Cuba.

14. (C) While conceding that the GOB's bilateral dialogue on human rights with China "is not very profound," Saboia said it is unlikely the GOB will support a resolution condemning the human rights situation in China. Moreover, Brazil will likely abstain on a no-action motion, as it has traditionally done in the past. (Comment: Given that Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim recently visited China and floated the idea of a free trade agreement, in addition to other trade initiatives, the probability of the GOB changing its traditional position of abstention seems low. End comment.)

Turkmenistan

15. (C) Saboia noted that during Third Committee meetings in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) the resolution condemning human rights violations in Turkmenistan had passed with wide support, though not Brazil's. As a result, the GOB is considering supporting a resolution in the CHR, he said. According to him, the GOB has received useful information

about the deterioration of the human rights situation in Turkmenistan from Great Britain and is now studying the matter. While not willing to provide an official response, Saboia said the GOB will likely support a "balanced" resolution.

Israel

16. (C) Saboia pointed out to poloff that the assassination of the head of Hamas was condemned by the GOB and said it, "complicates an already fragile situation and makes it very difficult for the peace process to move forward." While saying the GOB will wait to see any text regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he made it clear that Brazil believes Israeli government's policies of targeted assassinations, in addition to the ongoing construction of the Israeli defense barrier, are the primary obstacles to the peace process.

North Korea and Iran

17. (C) Saboia said Brazil will support a resolution on North Korea. The GOB has received "good information on the situation in North Korea from China," according to him. There is a possibility Brazil might support an Iran resolution, but the GOB will wait to see a text on Iran before making a determination. Saboia stressed that Brazil's support for an Iran resolution -- in the Third Committee during the UNGA last year -- should not be interpreted as meaning Brazil will automatically support one during the CHR.

Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and Democracy

18. (C) Concerning economic, social, and cultural rights, Saboia said the GOB believes them to be as important as political and civil rights. Therefore, the USG and the GOB may not be in complete agreement on some resolutions in this area. Brazil will likely support the resolutions "Promotion of a Democratic and Equitable International Order" and "Strengthening of Popular Participation," he said. Saboia was unable to respond to questions about the GOB's position on resolutions for Iraq and Zimbabwe, Romania's resolution on the Consolidation of Democracy, and Australia's resolution on Human Rights and Good Governance.

19. (C) Comment: Brazil's likely support for the Turkmenistan and North Korea country resolutions is considered exceptional by the MRE, the result of a broad consensus in the CHR, and what the GOB considers to be good, credible information it has received from Great Britain and China respectively. These exceptions demonstrate that the GOB can be swayed from its traditional position of non-support for country-specific resolutions, when a broad consensus among other CHR countries can be reached. End comment.

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